

Artist Statement

Kamila J Gruss

Freedom is an illusion

"Once, I received a Matryoshka doll as a gift. It was beautiful, wooden, and hand-painted. Additionally, this doll was like an onion, with several layers! Inside one doll, another one was hidden. And so on, from the largest to the smallest, from the smallest to the largest. However, despite its charm, I quickly grew bored of this toy. I couldn't dress it, hug it, or create new dolls because the parts of one didn't fit into another. The doll ended up in the corner. Looking at this frame, it is impossible to resist the impression that what we see is not everything we should see. The fish suffocates, the model suffocates, the artist suffocates... We all suffocate... Or perhaps, it's the awareness that our superiority over this fish is utopian? An imaginary belief that we have more rights, that more is possible for us, that our brain is smarter, our glass house bigger... We move from the aquarium to the terrarium, from the terrarium to the enclosure... From one box to another, what does it matter if it's prettier when it's still just a damn box! And freedom died for the first time when, ironically, people began to fight for it. The second time, we buried freedom when, for our own safety, we handed over the reins of our lives to beings in uniforms of all kinds. We are like Matryoshka dolls; we ourselves do not know what lies within us. Day by day, we fill certain patterns that everyone has absorbed with mother's milk. We live to live, and we feel so free and happy that, from this joy, once a year, we go on vacation (for a while). Isn't it wonderful? To take a pass to escape, even if just for a moment? Is it possible? And the fish says bul bul..."- Marta Wróbel

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Catching breath 2021